

## **INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS OF EXISTING RECREATION PROGRAMS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

A program analysis was conducted on the following individual program areas that were selected by Asheville Park and Recreation staff. National trends for each program area were overlaid and a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) was completed for each program area. Visits were made to most of the facilities where these programs exist and the staff had input on the program area summaries. The following is a brief summary of the findings in each program area.

The Asheville Parks and Recreation program offering provides a wide range of program services for residents of the area. The Department's program strengths are found in the special events, sports, arts, after school/daycamp activities, nutrition programs, and senior/special population programs.

These programs provide the bulk of the core programs and recognition the Department receives from the public and are well received by the community in terms of participation and support. The programs evaluated tended to follow traditional program trends of the 1960s and 1970s, except in the special events/festivals, daycare/pre-school and after school/daycamp programs, where the Department is clearly ahead of national trends in effort to service these program areas.

National program trends that are developing and have been in place for some time that could be developed into Asheville program management strategy for delivery of services are as follows:

- Nationally, fitness and wellness programs in the form of free weights and cardiovascular programs are on the rise and have been for some time. People are becoming more health conscious and as they grow older are paying more attention to what they eat and drink as well as exercising more by walking, bicycling, jogging, and cardiovascular training. This is evidenced by the fact that hospitals are creating more health and fitness programs and facilities and businesses are encouraging more wellness programs on stress, weight control, fitness, and education for employees. At the same time, schools are reducing physical education programs for youth resulting in youth becoming more overweight and not eating right.

Locally, Asheville does not appear to provide structured programs in the areas of free weights and cardiovascular programs or spaces. The Department does provide some aerobic programs for adults, but needs to consider adding more programs and additional designated spaces and equipment for cardiovascular and weight training.

- Nationally, parks and recreation agencies are developing more earned income opportunities to support operating budgets and pricing services based on benefits received against an established subsidy level for various segments of the populations being served. More programs are pricing both direct and indirect cost associated in providing the service.

Locally, Asheville's recreation programs are heavily subsidized and are priced to the 20% who cannot pay versus the 80% who can. Where the Department does charge program prices they typically include only direct cost and not indirect cost. The Department needs to evaluate their current pricing policy and update to national trends in pricing program services to the level of benefit received. Implementing a tracking system will assist in evaluating charges and fees and will allow the City to make informed decisions on what programs can sustain price adjustments without jeopardizing use by moderate or low-income participants. Additionally, the Department has not extensively sought other earned income opportunities such as advertising, sponsorships, partnerships, development of a park foundation, and licensing opportunities.

- Nationally, program standards with measurable outcomes are being developed for delivery of services. These include customer service standards for facilities, programs, operation practices for quality and quantity of hours, equipment provided, ratio of instructor-to-participant, and evaluating cost per experience and program lifecycles.

Locally, there was limited evidence of standards and performance measures in place for the programs reviewed. The Consultants are sure that some program standards are in place but they were not stated in the program information provided.

- Nationally, many departments are developing mini-market plans for facilities and programs to create a continuous learning process of delivery of services and managing capacity of facilities and program trends and life cycles. Staff is trained on how to manage against the market plans and measurable outcomes are developed and incorporated into the evaluation process for employees. In addition, evaluations of programs by pre- and post-evaluations, shopper programs, and focus groups are key evaluation processes being used by various departments around the country.

Locally, the Department did not have facility or program market plans in place for the staff to focus on and manage against. The Department does provide some post-evaluations and individual sites have basic goals and strategies but the ones reviewed were not consistent.

- Nationally, partnership development in program delivery is becoming the trend of the future. This is brought about because departments can no longer duplicate efforts in communities but must manage a community of resources to maximize efforts and efficiency of resources available. Partnerships with parks and recreation agencies have included school partnerships and investment partnerships in developing of new facilities or renovating facilities. Additional partnerships include not-for-profit partnerships with other service providers in the delivery of programs. Church partnerships, product partnerships, and interagency partnerships are becoming more popular to share resources.

Locally, the Department does not have many partnerships in place to leverage resources and maximize efficiency. Most of the partnerships with the City are in sports programs between youth organizations and special interest groups.

- Nationally, many cities provide a set of core programs for each recreation area based on the neighborhood and community being served. These core programs focus on specific neighborhood needs. Additional programs offered are wrapped around these core programs to provide balance and compliment other providers in the community.

Locally, the Department did not have a set of core program offerings identified for each recreation facility based on information reviewed and interviews with staff. Most programs were established based on hours of the center and availability of staff.

- Nationally, programs are being targeted by demographic area such as youth, teens, families, and seniors versus sports, arts, outdoor recreation, and aquatics. This trend allows staff to work in a specific area and cover all program aspects of that demographic group in the program categories. This allows for more communitywide thinking and less overlap of services.

Locally, the Department is set up in more traditional program areas.

- Nationally, recreation centers are targeting more intergenerational programs for people of all ages incorporating areas within centers for designated groups such as seniors and teens. This allows for more communitywide programming versus special interest. Recreation centers are opening more operational hours to targeted groups and are open seven days a week with longer hours to meet all the needs of the community.

Locally, Asheville recreation centers are not as focused on multi-dimensional programming whereby several programs are programmed simultaneously in one setting but instead are programmed for one use. The primary reason for this is due to lack of space at small center sites and personnel and/or supervision restraints.

## **INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM AREAS**

### **Program Area—Specialized Programs**

#### **Program Notes**

- The program area focuses on recreation programs for a wide variety of ages.
- Some of the programs included in this area are golf for the blind, wheelchair tennis, Very Special Arts Festival, a variety of sports for the disabled, sign language and interpreters, arts, and social events.
- The features provided in the program include addressing the needs of the mentally disabled, the blind/visually impaired, deaf, and physically disabled.
- The benefits of the program could include allowing mainstreaming and special recreation possibilities for persons who are disabled and social interaction.
- Benefits and advantages should be spelled out in marketing pieces.

#### **Current Strengths**

- A wide variety of programs are offered in this area and there is an increase in participation numbers.

#### **Current Weaknesses**

- There are other service providers offering similar programs, lack of adequate staff to provide support, no fee charged for services which places no value on the recreation experience, and only a few programs encourage mainstreaming.

- Marketing pieces were not available for analysis.

### **Improvements**

- Consider partnering with other agency providers, sponsorships with local businesses to help off set costs, and creating more programs that encourages mainstreaming.

## **Program Area—Swimming Pools/Aquatic Programs**

### **Program Notes**

- The program area offers recreation programs for children and adults.
- The inventory for this area includes Learn to Swim, Adult Swim, Teen Nights, and Exercise.
- The features for the program are two large pools, qualified instructors are provided, and a safe environment is offered.
- The benefits of the program were not listed on the information provided. The benefits could include social interaction for adults, learning to swim provides safety, competing on a swim team, and exercise with ease on joints.
- The marketing pieces should include the benefits, advantages, and features of the program at 65% benefits, 25% features, and 10% advantages.

### **Current Strengths**

- The programs are offered for all ages, entrance fees are charged for open swim times, and program fees are charged for lessons.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- The pools are old and in need of repair and fees for services provided seem low in relation to national trends.

### **Improvements**

- Possible improvements include family aquatic centers that include water slides, zero depth entry, sand play areas, spray pools, and grass sunbathing areas. These are being built all over the country as opposed to traditional pools. Pre-school and infant/parent swim classes are increasing. Water basketball and volleyball for youth and adults is also a growing program area.

## **Program Area-Senior Nutrition**

### **Program Notes**

- The program is offered for senior citizens and provides a balanced meal for seniors on a daily basis.
- The programs in this area include arts and crafts activities, billiards, wood shop, socials, exercise, and nutrition.
- There is a \$1.25 donation requested per person, per day.

- The benefits of the program include seniors are encouraged to interact with others, they are exposed to proper nutrition, educational opportunities are provided, and recreational skills are being developed.
- Marketing pieces were not provided for analysis. Marketing pieces should spell out the features, advantages, and benefits of the program.

### **Current Strengths**

- The program encourages seniors to be mobile and interactive and the participation numbers have increased.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- Other agencies in the area provide similar services, the costs of food preparation are high, there is lack of adequate staff, and there does not appear to be much participation by family members.

### **Improvements**

- Consider creating sponsorships to help off set program costs, utilizing volunteers to help off set staff costs, partnering with other agency providers to expand resources, and creating themes around meals to give variety to the program. Other options include providing transportation, having kitchens where staff is able to prepare the meals on site, programming by age group 55-60, 60-65, 65-70, 70-75, 75-80, 80 and older. Possible new program areas include Senior Fitness, Wellness Programs, Intergenerational Programs, and Senior Activity Clubs.

## **Program Area—Senior Programs/Special Events**

### **Program Notes**

- The program area is offered to seniors.
- The program inventory includes Senior Games, special trips, Senior Conferences, seminars, and workshops.
- The benefits of the program include allowing opportunities for seniors to compete in athletic events, encourages social interaction, and educational opportunities are provided.
- Marketing materials should include benefits, features, and advantages.

### **Current Strengths**

- There are a wide variety of programs offered, programs provide good opportunity for social interaction, fees are charged for program to help off set expenses, and participation numbers have increased.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- There are limited resources for programs and a lack of adequate staff for programs.

### **Improvements**

- Recommendations include sponsorships for trips and special events, partnering with other agency providers to utilize resources, intergenerational programs that encourage interaction with youth, grandparenting programs, and offering baby-sitting at Senior Centers for grandparents who are the primary caretakers of their grandchildren.

## **Program Area—Adult Programs/Recreation Centers**

### **Program Notes**

- The program area offers a wide variety of programs for adults at recreation centers.
- The programs in this area include many instructional classes in arts, crafts, dance, cooking, special interest workshops, presentations, and seminars.
- The marketing pieces do spell out some of the program advantages, benefits, and features.
- The benefits for the program include development of new interests, social interaction, quality leisure time, enhances personal skills, exercise, fun, and new challenges.

### **Current Strengths**

- There are a wide variety of programs offered for this area, the programs provide social interaction for adults, and programs are offered at a variety of times providing greater opportunity for participation.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- Some programs do not have a fee attached to them, the City should illustrate the level of financial commitment they have made to demonstrate the value of the programs to the citizens, participation numbers for some programs are low, and some programs are too long.

### **Improvements**

- Consider offering more one-day programs to allow adults to commit to shorter amounts of time, offering childcare during adult programs, and parent/child programs to encourage family interaction.

## **Program Area—Youth/Teen Centers**

### **Program Notes**

- The program area focuses on activities and classes for youth and teens.
- The programs have many features, benefits, and advantages, however they were not spelled out in the marketing pieces analyzed.
- Some of the features for the programs are community-based, positive alternatives for youth and teens, supervision by qualified staff, and they are educational in nature.
- There are many benefits for this program area including social interaction, positive use of leisure time, enhance skills in many areas, leadership, and responsibility.

- The program area is on target in the direction of supporting youth by providing public facilities and organized programs.

### **Current Strengths**

- There is a wide variety of programs and activities offered, good partnering with other City departments, i.e. the police department, some programs are community-oriented, and provides teens a positive place to “hang” out.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- Other agencies are providing some of the same services, expenses versus revenue are not balanced, some programs have low participation numbers, and no youth forum is in place to help guide adults in their planning.

### **Improvements**

- A possible improvement could include programs that create projects in the City to demonstrate the positive side of youth. Other improvements could include cleaning up areas in the City, flower scapes, mural paintings, etc. Incentive programs at recreation centers for good grades and utilizing volunteers to help off set staff costs. Other youth programs that are growing in popularity are Work-reation programs, Mayors’ Council on Youth, Smart Bars, Pride in Youth Days, more local business sponsors, and partners to help with costs of programs.

## **Program Area—Pre-School Programs**

### **Program Notes**

- The program area focuses on activities for children ages 2-5.
- Programs offered include arts and crafts, special events, mom and tots classes, and movement and dance classes.
- Some program descriptions have the features, benefits, and advantages listed, however not all the marketing pieces have these spelled out.
- The benefits include parent/child interaction, gross motor skill development, promotion of social interaction with other children, and new skill development.

### **Current Strengths**

- Participation numbers are stable or increasing, programs provide social interaction and help improve gross motor skills, and there are a good variety of classes offered in this program area.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- The Department is not charging a fee for programs, which places no value on the service provided and there is lack of staff training on program activities and instruction. There is a shortage of equipment for pre-school programs, which frustrates the staff.

### **Improvements**

- Possible improvements could include more parent/tot classes to promote family interaction, more classes that are one-day in length to lessen the time commitment on parents, offer programs at the same time adult programs are being offered, and offer computer skills classes. Consider hosting a toy fair with companies such as Little Tykes, Fisher Price, or Toys-R-Us as a way of getting new toys for the program in return for helping to promote a new line of toys or other children's products.

## **Program Area—District Special Events**

### **Program Notes**

- The program area offers recreation opportunities for a wide variety of ages.
- Programs are offered in the districts and are tailored to each community.
- Some of the programs include West Fest, Oakley Community Day, Shiloh Fall Festival, and Oakley Easter Eggstravaganza.
- The programs feature music, crafts, carnival games, prizes, field events, food, and entertainment.
- Marketing materials do a good job of stating features of the programs.
- The benefits and advantages include promoting community involvement, providing a safe place for kids and families to spend leisure time together, and promoting community awareness and pride.

### **Current Strengths**

- Strengths include participation numbers increasing, good partnering with the fire department and police departments, program promotes community involvement, and a wide variety of activities are provided at special events.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- Weaknesses to consider are fees do not cover expenses, local business sponsors are not used to help off set costs, and not enough staff to help cover events. The Department should let people know the level of investment the City makes.

### **Improvements**

- Recommendations are for more volunteer support to help staff run events and off set staff costs and pursue support from more local businesses or agencies to help sponsor events.

## **Program Area-Outdoor Adventure/Education**

### **Program Notes**

- The program area offers outdoor activities and classes for children and adults.
- Some of the programs include Outdoor Adventure Club for Adults, Enviro-Club for youth, ski outings, hiking, and over nights to lodges or camping.



- Marketing pieces do a good job of providing program information, but do not spell out features, benefits, and advantages of the programs.
- Some of the benefits and advantages are use of natural resources in the area, helps develop responsibility for care of nature, and helps develop since of self.

### **Current Strengths**

- There are a good variety of programs, participation numbers have increased, and there is a good use of local and natural resources.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- Not having fees for some of the programs places no value on services provided, youth programs are mostly subsidized, no partners or sponsors are in place, there is a lack of adequate staff for programs, and there is not sufficient transportation.

### **Improvements**

- Outdoor programs in general are growing in interest. Some new program ideas include Women in the Outdoors, Single Parent camping, backpacking, mountain biking, Environmental Camps, and partnering with local businesses to sponsor programs. The Department should consider adding of a full-time staff member for these programs.

## **Program Area—Co-Sponsored Club and Programs**

### **Program Notes**

- The programs in this area are for a wide variety of ages.
- Club meetings are held at the recreation centers and run by the club itself.
- Clubs are listed in the program guide but not marketed by the Asheville Parks and Recreation Department.
- Marketing pieces available for analysis did not include features, benefits, and advantages.

### **Current Strengths**

- Participation numbers have increased and club meetings bring in visitors to the recreation centers who may not otherwise come.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- The only fee charged is for non-residents and there is no fee charged to the club for use of the facility. Other weaknesses are expenses are not in balance with revenues and clubs seem to take up a lot of space at centers that could be used for other programs.

### **Improvements**

- Recommendations include charging clubs a nominal fee to help off set costs associated with use of the facility and have club members volunteer to help with other programs in return for use of the meeting rooms.

## **Program Area—After School/Day Camp**

### **Program Notes**

- The programs in this area are provided for school aged children.
- Programs are provided at school locations both during the summer program and the after school program.
- The marketing pieces analyzed do a good job at describing the programs and listing all the important information.
- Some of the material spelled out the features, however the benefits were not listed. These could include socialization, new skill development both in sports, arts, and crafts, and the program provides an opportunity for self-expression.

### **Current Strengths**

- Participation numbers are up at most locations, all sites are state licensed, the program provides a balanced meal during the summer and a snack for after school, and there are a wide variety of activities offered.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- There is not sufficient space at some sites, the use of the school is limited to the gym and playground, the level of subsidy is high compared to revenue, and there is a need for more staff training in some areas. The playgrounds are not certified by Child Protective Services (CPS certified).

### **Improvements**

- Improvements include providing ongoing training programs for instructors throughout the year, provide instructor training on new program ideas, seminars on child care, and meeting current needs at the sites. The program would improve by hiring a few instructors that are substitutes to float from site to site and can fill in when needed, utilize volunteers when appropriate, and partner with other agencies to help off set program costs. Some new program ideas include adding themes to weeks or days, have tournaments in different sports, and any programs that promote art skills. Consider changing the hours of the program and charging for after and before care.

## **Program Area—Summer Playground/Teen and Rec-n-Roll**

### **Program Notes**

- The programs in this area are provided for teens and youth.
- The programs are held at 11 playground sites, 7 teen and 4 Rec-n-Roll.
- Marketing pieces were very thorough at giving the important information about the program.
- Some of the pieces analyzed did not spell out the benefits of the program. These include social interaction, supervised activities, new skill development, and a chance for self-expression.

### **Current Strengths**

- A wide variety of programs are offered at each site, lunch is provided for the summer playground program, the Rec-n-Roll program offers children a chance to participate in a program even if they are not enrolled in a structured program, and participation numbers are up.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- The programs are heavily subsidized, there is a lack of adequate staff, and there is no fee charged for some of the programs.

### **Improvements**

- Consider partnering with other agencies to provide program, utilize volunteers to help off set program costs, and get sponsorships from local businesses to help sponsor program.

## **Program Area—Food Service**

### **Program Notes**

- The program provides meals for after school, daycamp, and summer playgrounds.
- There were no marketing materials available for analysis.
- The program benefits include a balanced meal for those who may not receive proper nutrition during program hours.

### **Current Strengths**

- The Department is meeting a need in the community, children are learning about proper nutrition, and participation numbers are increasing.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- The program is 100% subsidized, the costs for providing the program seem to be high, the paperwork involved in participating in the program seems excessive, and the meals are prepared off-site and have to be transported.

### **Improvements**

- Consider utilizing volunteers to help off set staff costs.

## **Program Area—Transportation**

### **Program Notes**

- The program is used to provide transportation for the City of Asheville's recreation programs such as the adventure, summer food delivery, summer playground transportation to activities and other center activities.
- There were no marketing pieces available for analysis.

- The benefits of this program include providing the opportunity for participants without transportation to participate in recreation programs, social interaction, and leads to the development of other program opportunities.

#### **Current Strengths**

- The transportation helps make programs available for those who might not be able to participate, helps in scheduling programs, field trips for daycamp and summer playgrounds, and participation numbers are increasing as well as the demand for the program.

#### **Current Weaknesses**

- Larger capacity vehicles are needed, the number of vehicles available is not efficient for program needs, the cost for the program seems high, and there are no partnerships or sponsors in place for the program. The Department might consider adding a rec-rider program.

#### **Improvements**

- Create sponsors with local businesses to help with the funding of the program, look at purchasing the vehicles for the City to have access to at all times, charge participants a nominal fee for utilizing the program, or build the cost of the transportation into the program fee.

### **Program Area- Co-Sponsored Outdoor Special Events**

#### **Program Notes**

- These activities are co-sponsored by the Asheville Parks and Recreation Department.
- Some of the programs offered include First Night, Martin Luther King Parade/Celebration, Walk America, Very Special Arts Festival, Children's Fun Fest, Greek Festival, and Halloween Fun Fair.
- Groups provide a \$25 application or \$25 park use fee.
- Without the Asheville Parks and Recreation Department these events would not be possible to operate at their current level.

#### **Current Strengths**

- There are numerous partnership opportunities, available resources, and it is good for community involvement.

#### **Current Weaknesses**

- The fees paid for services do not offset costs. The number of co-sponsored events is high and seems to be growing. The groups are not dealt with equitably.

#### **Improvements**

- In the future, make sure partners know the value of what the Parks and Recreation Department gives to an event and charge a percentage of revenue from events rather

than a flat fee to applicants. There needs to be requirements set for groups wanting to have events co-sponsored with the Department.

## **Program Area—Youth Basketball**

### **Program Notes**

- The program is established for youth boys grades 1-8 and girls 5-8.
- The program is held in partnership with the YMCA of Asheville and Buncombe County.
- There is a high school co-ed program in conjunction with the Asheville Police, Asheville Parks and Recreation Department, and the YMCA.
- The basketball program incorporates 8 games for youth.
- The high school program incorporates league play and a tournament.
- The features of the program are the interactive opportunities between volunteer coaches.
- The youth play is by the high school rules contract.
- A draft is held each year to balance the teams and a coaches contract and player pledge is incorporated into the program.
- The benefits of the program are the local interaction and collaboration efforts, philosophy of the program, skills developed, the opportunity to engage in competition, parent development, racial mix of athletes involved in the program, and low cost.

### **Current Strengths**

- The strengths of the program are the history of the program, volunteer involvement, the program is stable, low cost, and co-ed youth involvement.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- The weaknesses of the program are the availability of gym space available, the low cost of the program, the information brochures don't spell out the features, benefits, and advantages of the program.

### **Improvements**

- The program should incorporate a national certification coaching program to provide greater benefits to players and parents. The program has the potential for more sponsorship opportunities to help cover the budget loss, because of what it brings to youth and the community. A greater effort needs to be made to involve girls in the high school program and an improved promotional flyer needs to be created to encourage more involvement by participants. More space needs to be created for additional leagues at other gyms in the city.
- National trends are incorporating youth play leagues for ages four and five, father/son, mother/daughter, and 3 on 3 leagues are popular in the off season. Youth programs can utilize 8' goals and junior basketballs are popular.

## **Program Area—Youth Baseball/Softball**

### **Program Notes**

- The programs focuses on youth (boys and girls) ages 5 to 18 in tee ball 5 to 6, 7 to 8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15, 16-18, and senior girls.
- The program has excellent participation of 3,000 youth.
- The program is parent-driven and designed and managed by the Asheville Parks and Recreation Department.
- There are six softball/baseball associations involved in the total program.
- The program features 12-15 games, a youth sports complex, lights, and umpires.
- The majority (80-93%) of the people are satisfied with the program in all six leagues.
- Benefits of the program include team development, building confidence, learning new skills, building friendships, sportsmanship, and good community support.

### **Current Strengths**

- There is good organization, good survey of user satisfaction available, good prices for players' fees, a good variety of opportunities exists, and the program is growing. Parents provide good support with volunteer hours.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- There is a need for better lights, play equipment, upgrading fields and drainage, covered dugouts, and parents run the program.

### **Improvements**

- Improvements include implementing certification, creating a plan for upgrading each game field in the City, considering a new baseball/softball complex in the future, and a more professional staff from Asheville Parks and Recreation Department is needed in the organization of the program. There is a need for more girls' softball opportunities.
- The audit report shows the need for tighter controls on the cash management of the program by the parent organization.
- The brochures of the program used for recruiting do not depict the benefits or advantages of the program. Most of the information focuses on the features.

## **Program Area—Adult Softball**

### **Program Notes**

- The program is offered for ages 16 and up during the spring, summer, and fall.
- The program is in need of a four to five field softball complex.
- The program is limited by the availability of space.
- The benefits of the program include providing a fun, competitive, and recreational social environment for adults.

### **Current Strengths**

- Strengths include good program support and the existing fields are in good condition. There is strong community involvement and the Asheville Parks and Recreation Department controls 100% of the market.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- There is no game complex to promote additional leagues or tournament play. Program expenses exceed revenues and there is a need for an upgraded computerized system for tracking the programs (team entries, scheduling, tournament play, etc.) The marketing pieces do not demonstrate the features, benefits, and advantages of the program. Hotel rates are too high when tournaments are held.

### **Improvements**

- National trends include development of game field complexes, specialty leagues (50 and over and 3rd shift daytime), more tournaments, and moving fences in to 275' and 250' as players grow older to keep them playing.

## **Program Area—Adult Basketball**

### **Program Notes**

- This program focuses on adults 16 and over consisting of men with teams made up of 8 to 15 members.
- Games are two 20-minute halves and all games are full court.
- There are church leagues and the games are played under high school rules.
- This program is in a mature life cycle.
- The program fees are reasonable in price.

### **Current Strengths**

- The longevity and the officials are strengths of the program. The City is the only provider. The program is a benefit to the community by providing recreation competition, exercise and fitness, skill development, winning/losing experience, and social experiences.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- Some of the gyms are too small and the number of courts available limits the size of the program. There are no women's leagues identified in the information provided. The information piece does not depict features, benefits, and advantages of the program.

### **Improvements**

- The trends in the market are to move to 3 on 3 for adults over 30 years of age. Also establish a high school program in the off season for high school players. Additional trends are to build adult basketball complexes that have four or five courts and allows youth to play in non-prime time and for coaches to provide clinics and tournaments which have high economic appeal.

## **Program Area—Adult Volleyball**

### **Program Notes**

- The program focuses on youth and adult leagues for men and women.
- They play 2 out of 3 games to 15 points and are all competitive.
- The program is in a down cycle in league play, but up in the Neighbor Volley Tournament.
- Volleyball rules are USAVB rules and 32-36 teams participate.
- Revenues for each program are low but acceptable. Two seasons of volleyball occur fall and winter.
- Marketing information did not indicate the leagues were for men, women, or co-ed.

### **Current Strengths**

- Strengths are the history of the program, the program has one of the best national volleyball tournaments in the country, and the gyms played are in are good.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- Officials are not professionals, there is a need to evaluate revenues and expenses against established subsidy levels, and marketing information does not spell out the benefits of the program only the features.

### **Improvements**

- Volleyball programs at a national level are on the upswing. More recreational play is needed in the program versus all power play. Corporate programs for volleyball are popular. Youth co-ed volleyball for ages 13-18 are very popular and growing. Summer volleyball clinics are very popular and could be incorporated into the program.

## **Program Area—First Night**

### **Program Notes**

- The program focuses on a total family experience for New Year's Eve.
- The event is totally managed and sponsored by the City of Asheville
- The program is a paid attendance event with approximately 6,000+ participants at \$6 a person in advance and \$8 the day of the event.
- The event direct cost generates a 15% revenue to expense cost. (Staff costs are not included).
- Alcohol-free celebration of music, dance, and food.
- This is a great image event for the City to begin a New Year out right.
- The information provided by staff was excellent.
- It builds a sense of community for the Asheville residents.

### **Current Strengths**

- This is a communitywide event. The event is in a growth mode, it has a good base of revenue to help with financing, and there appears to be strong business support shown



by the number of businesses who are committed to the event. There is also a strong community of entertainers committed to performing at the event. The marketing strategy for getting people involved is good and the event has excellent TV and media coverage. Marketing pieces are diverse and cleverly handled for encouraging people to attend the event. Volunteer support for staging the event is very strong.

### **Current Weaknesses**

- The event needs to have strong headliner acts for entertainment. Need to encourage fast-food restaurants to sale passports. Need to seek a higher level of sponsorship commitment to make the event grow. This will require more staff, time, and budget. Increased budget can come from a combination of sources (users, sponsors, and vendor fees). The event lacks ethnic acts to attract a more diverse population. Marketing material does not reflect a strong theme.

### **Improvements**

- The City should consider developing a request for proposal in marketing the sponsorship for the event. This could make the process more competitive and bring in more dollars in the value of sponsorships being offered. A two price ticket, youth and adults, should be considered. Roving entertainers are good for the event. A small carnival for kids would add value to a family entertainment component and give the City added ticket revenue. Allow groups to sell the passport for a set price while letting the group keep a \$1 as a fund raiser could help increase sales. The event could use a spokesperson that is a media celebrity.